

meeting the objective of facilitating veterans readjustment.

The Commission members elected Mr. Anthony Principi to serve as chairman and Mr. Kim Wincup as vice chairman. Mr. Principi is a former Deputy Secretary and Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs and Mr. Wincup is a former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Acquisition) and Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs). Both of these commissioners also have significant experience on Capitol Hill, and are well known in military and veterans circles. The additional 10 Commission members are: Gen. James B. Davis (Ret.), Mr. Richard Johnson, Mr. Mack Fleming, Mr. Tom Harvey, Lt. Col. Renee Priore (Ret.), Brig. Gen. Robert (Steve) Stephens (Ret.), Mr. Ron Drach, Mr. Christopher Jehn, Lt. Gen. Edgar Chavarrie (Ret.), and Mr. Michael Blecker. Each of the members has responsibilities outside of the Commission, and I appreciate the job they are about to take on.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to address what I feel to be the most important objective for the Commission to accomplish. We have a wide variety of benefits for veterans and active duty members about to leave the service. These programs have been put in place over the years as Congress saw a need and had the resources to meet those needs.

The Commission's challenge, as I see it, is to determine whether these programs work well as a transition and readjustment package. For all that our servicemembers do in service to our country, we owe them as smooth a return to civilian life as possible, and this Commission's job is to provide us with an independent analysis on how well the package of programs and benefits are doing the job. Each Commission member has a diverse and knowledgeable background in the areas of military and veterans' affairs, and I am confident that they can meet this challenge.

THE COST OF LIVING ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1997

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue that affects millions of Americans. As you all know, the recently released Boskin Commission concluded that the Consumer Price Index [CPI] overstates the rate of inflation by 1.1 percent. In light of this finding, several changes to the way in which the CPI is calculated have been proposed. Members of Congress, the President, and other government officials have different ideas on whether the Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS] should continue to adjust the CPI when necessary or if an independent commission should make any needed changes. However, one element is lacking with these proposals: accountability.

Whether we continue to have the Bureau of Labor Statistics determine the CPI, or pass that responsibility along to an independent commission, or choose another alternative, Members of Congress have a duty to ensure that any changes to the CPI are in the best interest of our citizens. We must be held to a vote on the matter.

There are tough choices ahead in our quest to balance the budget. Federal benefits whose

COLA's are linked to the CPI include: Social Security, Federal employee and military retirement, veterans pensions, child nutrition programs, and the Earned Income Tax Credit [EITC]. In addition, income tax brackets are also determined by the CPI. A quick fix to the problem of balancing the budget could be simply to adjust the rate of inflation, which would lower payments for recipients of benefits of all of the above programs and raise taxes. But quick fixes rarely solve the problem over the long run. We should not use the CPI as a budget balancing tool.

The CPI is a cash cow that some Republicans are trying to use to achieve their budget goals. They are shopping for a commission to do the BLS's job, because they want the CPI decreased, and the BLS is not moving quickly enough for them. If the BLS was not being pressured by these Republicans and some in the Administration to recalculate this index to their specifications, this bill would not be necessary.

The Republicans want the President to change the CPI administratively. They want this to be done so that when our seniors' Social Security COLA's are reduced, they can blame it on someone else. They are hiding behind someone else's decision instead of holding themselves accountable for these extremely difficult budget decisions facing this Congress.

The BLS and its commissioner, Katharine Abraham, are moving as quickly as they can to examine if any changes should be made to the CPI. This is not an expert science, but it is the best system we have. The BLS economists are experts, and should be the ones to continue to make these important calculations.

My legislation does not offer any particular solution to fix the CPI. Instead, it simply requires that any proposed changes be approved by the Congress. During consideration of the fiscal year 1996 Labor-HHS appropriations bill, I, along with Representative BARNEY FRANK, offered an amendment which would protect Social Security COLA's, among other things, from unfair cuts by requiring Congressional approval of any changes in the formula used to calculate the CPI. My amendment was passed by the House, but later dropped in the House-Senate conference on the bill.

My amendment has now been reintroduced as a free standing measure. I hope that all of my colleagues will join me and again decide to be held accountable for any changes to the many programs that are affected by changes in the CPI.

INDIAN HILL PRIMARY'S INTERNATIONAL PEACE MUSEUM

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues a wonderful event that has taken place at a primary school I visited back home in the district I represent.

The students at Indian Hill Primary have been learning about the many opportunities available to them on the Internet. The teachers have made this new technology an integral part of their lesson plans which, as the principal said, makes their daily lessons come alive.

For example, second grade students, motivated by the example set by Dr. Martin Luther King in his battle for equality through non-violent protest, decided to share what peace means to them. With innovative leadership from teachers, facilitators, and the creativity of the students, their efforts culminated in the creation of the "International Peace Museum."

This museum web site includes the students' definitions of peace, while also displaying the second graders' illustrations. Because they invite other classes, students, leaders, and governments from around the world to contribute, the students at Indian Hill Primary have already heard from schools in Bermuda, Canada, and throughout the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Indian Hill Primary's International Peace Museum.

INTRODUCTION OF INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT AMENDMENTS

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to offer legislation with the ranking minority member of the Resources Committee, Mr. GEORGE MILLER. The 104th Congress considered several legislative bills to amend the Indian Child Welfare Act [ICWA], however, none of the legislative measures were enacted into law. In May 1996, the Committee on Resources and I directed the Tanana Chiefs Conference to begin a consultation effort with the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, National Indian Child Welfare Association, and tribes to draft ICWA legislation.

Last year, tribal representatives met in Tulsa, OK, to reach a consensus to address concerns expressed with the ICWA. This legislation contains identical language which was drafted and agreed to by the Academy of Adoption Attorneys and tribal representatives in H.R. 3828. H.R. 3828 was favorably reported out of the Committee on Resources, however it was not considered by the House in the 104th Congress. This legislation addresses many of the concerns of the adoption of native children by providing notice to tribes for voluntary adoptions, terminations of parental rights, and foster care proceedings. It provides for time lines for tribal intervention in voluntary cases and provides criminal sanctions to discourage fraudulent practices in Indian adoptions. The proposal provides for open adoptions in States where State law prohibits them and clarifies tribal courts authority to declare children wards of the tribal courts. Additionally, it clarifies the limits on withdrawals of parental consent to adoptions. In addition, it states that attorneys and public and private agencies have a duty to inform Indian parents of their rights under ICWA, and provides for tribal membership certification in adoptions. These reforms resolve the ambiguities in current law which resulted in needless litigation, and have disrupted Indian adoption placements without reducing this country's commitment to protect native American families and promote the best interest of native children.

Mr. Speaker, all of the provisions contained in this bill have been tentatively embraced by the Academy of Adoption Attorneys and tribal representatives. My committee will seek additional input from the Department of Justice,

the Department of the Interior, and the Department of Health and Human Services. Last year, both the Department of Justice and the Department of the Interior embraced identical ICWA legislation. Additionally, Jane Gorman, the attorney for the Rost family embraced and supported passage of this legislation in the 104th Congress. The Rost case has been a sad and tragic case which was caused by an attorney who tried to cover up the natural parent's tribal membership and purposefully avoided checking with the grandparents and extended family of the children to see if the family was available to adopt these children. The sad part is that this attorney did not violate the law, but he inflicted sorrow on the Rosts, the grandparents of the children, and ultimately on the children themselves. This proposed legislation will impose criminal sanctions on attorneys who violate ICWA requirements in the adoptions of a native child. In closing, I believe we have acceptable legislation which will protect the interests of adoptive parents, native extended families, and most importantly, Alaska Native and American Indian children.

TRIBUTE TO JAIME "JIMMY"
RODRÍGUEZ

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Jaime Rodríguez, a successful Puerto Rican entrepreneur, a community activist, and a role model in the Bronx community.

Jimmy, as most of his friends and associates know him, is the owner of a very popular restaurant and sports bar in the Bronx—Jimmy's Bronx Cafe.

Jimmy's Bronx Cafe offers some of the best Puerto Rican cuisine in New York City. The restaurant's success is credited to Jimmy's managerial skills and superb taste for food.

As a young man, Jimmy was resolute in his studies as well as in following in his father's footsteps by taking interest in the seafood business. He learned the business from the ground up and had the opportunity to open the seafood restaurant "Marisco del Caribe." Later on, he expanded it to what is now Jimmy's Bronx Cafe.

A good friend and mentor, Jimmy has been committed to giving back to the community in which he was born and raised. Together with the Hispanic Federation of New York City, Jimmy helped to gather toys and hosted a toy drive at his restaurant this past "Three Kings Day," a Christmas tradition in Hispanic communities.

Jimmy has sponsored 106 little league teams and donates frequently to local charities. Among these, Jimmy donates food regularly to the home-shelter Teresa Haven and to the senior citizen center "Los Abuelitos." The Grandparents. Jimmy also contributes to Christmas in April, an organization which every year assists in renovating homes for senior citizens.

Besides his charity work, Jimmy participates in numerous community and advisory boards, including his membership with the Hispanic Federation of New York City.

As a visionary businessman, Jimmy has plans to open La Terraza Dinner Theater,

Bronx Tours Entertainment and Cultural Tours, and other restaurants, like Jimmy's Bronx Cafe, in various cities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Mr. Jaime "Jimmy" Rodríguez for his entrepreneurial spirit and community activism which have served well our Bronx community and the Nation.

OUR FOUNDING FATHER'S ADVICE

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, a free society has to maintain a balance between healthy partisan disagreements and a destructive spirit of faction. Congresswoman JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD shared with her colleagues this last weekend a letter quoting George Washington's Farewell Address. I believe Members, staff and interested citizens will find her letter and our Founding Father's advice helpful as this 105th Congress develops. I submit the letter into the RECORD.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 6, 1997.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: I am writing to share with you portions of George Washington's Farewell Address. I have recently revisited this timeless document and was stuck anew by the utter timelessness of our first American President's insights into the well-being and health of our great Union—even though President Washington penned these words over 200 years ago! As Members of the 105th Congress, we may do well to consider President Washington's admonitions to ensure productive government, sound legislation, and a strong Union:

"I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State. . . . Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

"This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly the worst enemy. . . .

"It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passion. Thus the policy and the will of one county are subjected to the policy and will of another.

"There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government and serve to keep the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast patriotism may look with indulgence, if not favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be force of public

opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume."

These words of one of our Nation's founders reiterate the historical mandate for Members of Congress to approach our representative roles in a collegial and bipartisan manner for the benefit of our country. If you would like a copy of President Washington's complete Farewell Address, please call my Chief of Staff Andrea D. Martin at 5-7924.

Warm regards,
JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD,
Member of Congress.

IN HONOR OF DR. GARY R. MAITA,
D.M.D.: AN OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL AND VALUED COMMUNITY MEMBER

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 1997

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a truly unique individual, Dr. Gary Maita, whose dedication to his community will long be remembered by his family, friends, and community. Dr. Maita's longtime dedication to others will be honored with a testimonial dinner on March 14, 1997, at the F.A. MacKenzie Post in Bayonne.

This well deserved recognition will celebrate Dr. Maita's many selfless contributions. His odyssey of community service began at an early age when he attended both Assumption Grammar School and Marist High School. Here is where Dr. Maita's love of education and the interests of young people developed. He subsequently attended both Stockton State College and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, and became a respected member of the medical profession. Many people in Bayonne and Hudson County owe their broad smile to the expertise of Dr. Maita.

Dr. Maita's life has been dedicated to the enhancement of the lives of the children of his community. His own attainment of the Silver Beaver Scout Award set the stage for a lifetime of meritorious achievement. Dr. Maita has served the educational needs of the boys and girls of the local area through numerous positions he has held in Hudson County; including, vice president of the Bayonne Board of Education, president of the Bayonne Council, Boy Scouts of America, and a sponsor of Bayonne Youth Soccer League. Children are not the only people fortunate enough to have benefited from Dr. Maita's exceptional commitment to the Bayonne community. Additionally, he has served as a member of the Bayonne Chapter of Unico, executive board member of the Hudson Liberty Council, and president of the Bayonne Chapter of Rotary International.

While Dr. Maita is always willing to lend a hand to others in his community, his heart belongs to his beloved family. He is the proud son of Anthony and Ann Maita, two pillars of the Bayonne area. Dr. Maita is married to the former Mariann Leszynski. This joyful union has brought a permanent smile to the faces of both Dr. and Mrs. Maita through the birth of their son, Andrew.

It is an honor to applaud the many accomplishments of Dr. Gary R. Maita. He has provided great joy and medical care to the lives